



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### Our Commitment

- We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying and harassment of any kind is unacceptable at our school, whether it is in the school or in off-site activities. If bullying or harassment does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying or harassment is happening is expected to tell the staff.
- All members of the Academy Trust, staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying/ harassment is and what the school's procedures are for responding to bullying/ harassment.
- As an academy we take bullying and harassment seriously. Students, staff and parents and anyone associated with the school should be assured that we do not tolerate bullying/harassment and that they will be supported when such behaviour is reported.

### Defining bullying and / or harassment

Bullying or harassment is the use of deliberate aggression with the intention of hurting another person.

#### **Bullying/ harassment can be:**

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures);
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- Homophobic: because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality;
- Because of learning or physical disabilities
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing because of appearance etc.
- Cyber: all areas of internet use, such as e-mail and internet chat room misuse
- Mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities, MSN, Snapchat etc.

**MAKING GREAT LEADERS**



## Why is it important to respond to bullying/harassment?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to suffer from bullying or harassment. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students and staff who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

### Examples of behaviour changes brought about by bullying are:

- Being frightened of walking to or from school
- Not wanting to go to school by public/school transport
- Insisting on being driven to school
- Changing usual routines
- Being unwilling to go to school after previously enjoying being part of the school community
- Beginning to truant
- Becoming withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starting to stammering;
- Attempting or threatening to run away or self-harm
- Crying themselves to sleep at night
- Having nightmares
- Feeling ill in the morning
- Beginning to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Having possessions which are damaged or unexpectedly go missing
- Asking for money or starting to steal money (to pay bully)
- Having dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Having unexplained cuts or bruises
- Coming home hungry (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becoming unusually aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable

**MAKING GREAT LEADERS**



- Starts to bully or harass other children or siblings
- Stopping eating
- Being frightened to say what's wrong
- Being afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Becoming nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received
- Giving improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying/ harassment should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. Other signs may also manifest themselves not sited here.

## How we respond to Bullying

### The responsibility of the Academy Trust

The Academy Pastoral Team are the 'anti - bullying / harassment representative. He / she will liaise with the Chair, the Principal and a designated teacher over all anti-bullying/ harassment strategies and individual cases where appropriate.

The School Council will discuss, review and endorse agreed strategies on the initiative of the nominated Council member, and in any case will discuss the Principal's annual report on the working of this policy.

### The Principal

The Principal has a legal duty to draw up procedures to prevent bullying/ harassment among students. In doing this he / she will:

- Ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing school strategies and reviewing them
- Determine the appropriate school strategies and procedures;
- Discuss development of the strategies and procedures with the School Leadership Team
- Ensure appropriate training is available to all relevant adults and students
- Ensure that a system for recording bullying / harassment incidents is in place
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and students, and report annually to the School Council.

**MAKING GREAT LEADERS**



### **Designated senior member of staff**

The principal will nominate a senior staff member who will:

- be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both those being bullied and the bullies
- maintain the school's record of incidents of bullying
- keep the Principal informed of incidents
- arrange relevant staff training
- determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems
- make a termly report to the Principal
- promote a culture of anti-bullying/harassment

### **All Staff will:**

- Be responsible for liaising with the designated member of staff over all incidents involving students in their form
- Ensure that all incidents of bullying are reported to the designated senior member of staff
- Be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution
- Take part in the school's anti-bullying/ harassment program
- Know the policy and procedures;
- Be observant and ask students what is happening to them;
- Deal with incidents according to the policy; and
- Never let any incidences of bullying / harassment pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity

**MAKING GREAT LEADERS**



## **The curriculum**

The School will raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying/ harassment through its curriculum programme. Anti-bullying / harassment messages will be delivered through:

- The school's programme of assemblies
- The Student Council
- Ministries
- The use of tutorial time and in the curriculum programs of study as appropriate
- Anti-Bully awareness week – raising the profile around school
- Restorative Justice

## **Changing the attitudes of those who bully**

Changing the attitude and behaviour of students who bully will play a major part in the strategies used by the School.

## **Parents**

The school will encourage all parents to immediately contact the school if bullying is suspected. Parents will be encouraged to talk about the signs and symptoms and any suspicions they have regarding those carrying out the bullying. However, parents must leave the initial investigation to the School. Any attempt to resolve the issue themselves is likely to make the matter worse. Parents should encourage their child to talk to an appropriate member of staff in the first instance, or a student trained in anti-bullying.

## **Students**

The school will encourage all students who think they are being bullied to tell an adult, parent or a member of staff and to explain what form the bullying/ harassment is taking and how it affects them. Students will be encouraged to report possible incidents of bullying/ harassment to an adult parent or other member of staff.

**MAKING GREAT LEADERS**



## **The processes and strategies that the school will use in tackling incidents of bullying / harassment**

If bullying/ harassment is reported to a member of staff they must record the details as presented to them on an incident log or file and pass these on to the designated staff member. No promise of confidentiality can be given.

In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.

All incidents of bullying are kept in a year log and in the Safeguarding file. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted or involved.

## **Resolving the Issues**

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with an appropriate member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the student
- Offering continuous support with a designated member of staff
- Restoring self-esteem and self-confidence
- Referral to a Peer Mentor if appropriate
- Referral to a counsellor
- Offering continuous support and advice to parents (this may be a referral to Early Help)
- Being informed about the outcome of the investigation in to their concerns
- Aspire Mentor
- Youth Worker
- School Nurse

**MAKING GREAT LEADERS**



### **Students who have been bullied will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the student became involved
- Establishing the wrong-doing and the need for change
- Informing parents to help change the attitude of the student

### **Strategy to be used in resolving the issue**

Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school. However, the school recognises that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies.

1. Following a reported incident staff will investigate using the school's '3R Strategy' strategy, with the support of other members of staff as appropriate:
  - Reflection – What has happened? Could it have been different?
  - Resolution – How can we try to ensure this doesn't happen again?
  - Reconciliation – How we put things right between those involved?
2. Time out/ reflection time may be used if deemed appropriate. The level of time out will be determined by the success of the 3Rs process and at the discretion of the member of staff involved.
3. Referral to a counsellor (if necessary) - Youth Team/outside agencies
4. Attendance at a mediation (restorative justice) meeting with the effected student to resolve issues and prevent recurrence
5. If a student continues to inform that they are being bullied, they should be provided with a log book to record this and further investigation must take place

### **Sanctions**

Students who have bullied will be punished appropriately according to their behaviour, in accordance with the School's Behaviour for Learning policy. For persistent offenders or incidents considered as gross acts of aggression, a student may be permanently excluded. We engage all student parliament in this process where it is appropriate to do so.

**MAKING GREAT LEADERS**



## **Complaints**

If a parent or carer is dissatisfied with the response made by the School following a reported incident of bullying/ harassment, he/she may make a complaint in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy.

## **Equal Opportunities**

In implementing this policy all members of staff must take into account the School's Equal Opportunities policy. Staff must ensure that no student involved in any incident of bullying/ harassment is disadvantaged on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

## **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

Great Schools Trust will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

**MAKING GREAT LEADERS**